

Message Text

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ACTION ARA-14

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AMEMBASSY PARIS

AMEMBASSY SANTIAGO

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TAGS: SHUM, MILI, UY

SUBJ: SECOND SEQUEL TO MC AULIFFE SAGA

USIA FOR ILA, IOP/M

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1. SUMMARY. THE ORGY OF HUMAN RIGHTS PRESS COVERAGE UNLEASHED BY THE ATTACKS ON GENERAL MC AULIFFE DECEMBER 12 CONTINUED THROUGH THE WEEKEND AND MONDAY DECEMBER 19. WITH MC AULIFFE'S DEPARTURE, COVERAGE SHIFTED TO ATTACKS ON THE GOLDMAN HUMAN RIGHTS GROUP VISIT WITH FALLOUT INTO OTHER AREAS SUCH AS SOLIDATIRY OF SOUTHERN CONE COUNTRIES IN THE FACE OF HUMAN RIGHTS PRESSURES. PRO-GOVERNMENT "EL PAIS" HAS BEEN IN THE LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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FOREFRONT OF THESE ATTACKS, FREELY DISTORTING, WHILE INDEPENDENT "EL DIA" HAS DONE ITS BEST TO PRESENT THE FACTS AND DEFEND THE HUMAN RIGHTS CASE. DESPITE THE DISTORTIONS, THE NET RESULT HAS BEEN HEAVY PRESS COVERAGE OF STATEMENTS EXPLAINING AND DEFENDING USG AND INTERNATIONAL CONCERNS FOR HUMAN RIGHTS IN URUGUAY. IRONICALLY, THE URUGUAYAN PUBLIC EXPERIENCED AND UNEXPECTED

AND MOST FITTING COMMEMORATION OF HUMAN RIGHTS WEEK. END SUMMARY.

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2. ALL THREE MORNING PAPERS, DECEMBER 18, CARRIED EXTENSIVE REPORTS OF THE DECEMBER 17 PRE-DEPARTURE GOLDMAN HUMAN RIGHTS GROUPS PRESS CONFERENCE WHICH GOLDMAN OPENED BY STATING CATEGORICALLY, "WE WISH TO CLARIFY THAT WE HAVE NOT COME HERE TO REPRESENT THE POINT OF VIEW OF THE U.S. DEPARTMENT OF STATE, NOR OF ANY OTHER COUNTRY."

3. PRO-GOVERNMENT EL PAID FRONT-PAGED THREE SEPARATE STORIES RELATED TO THE PRESS CONFERENCE, WHICH IT CLAIMED "FAILED" IN ITS EFFORTS TO DISCREDIT REPORTS THE NEWSPAPER HAD PREVIOUSLY PUBLISHED. ONE ARTICLE WAS HEADED, "GOLDMAN CONFIRMS THAT HE PREPARED THE OAS REPORT AGAINST URUGUAY" ANOTHER "PAX ROMANA WITH MARXISM; IT HAS SUBVERSIVE MEMBERS." A THIRD UNDER BANNER HEADLINE CHARGED THE JUSISTS "ASK FOR RELEASE OF TUPAMARO CHIEFS" AND CARRIED ONE-COLUMN HEAD SHOTS OF RAUL SENDIC, HENRY EMBLER, MORENALES SAENZ AND JORGE AMILCAR MANERA LLUVERAS, WHO ALLEGEDLY HEADED THE LIST OF POLITICAL PRISONERS GOLDMAN, WEIL AND MARTINEZ REPORTEDLY ASKED THE GOU TO FREE.

4. PRESTIGIOUS INDEPENDENT EL DIA CARRIED THE MOST OBJECTIVE COVERAGE WITH A CHRONOLOGICAL ACCOUNTING OF THE FULL PRESS CONFERENCE, ON PAGE 12, HEADED "FOREIGN JUSISTS: THEY INDICATED LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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THEY RECEIVED CORRECT TREATMENT." SIGNIFICANTLY, EL DIA REPORTED SEVERAL EXCERPTS FROM THE PRESS CONFERENCE NOT REPORTED IN EL PAIS. ONE, WITH WHICH EL DIA CONCLUDES ITS REPORT QUOTES DR. WEIL NOTING THAT "IT IS CONTRADICTORY TO ACCUSE ME OF SERVING INTERNATIONAL MARXISM AND THE PENTAGON AT THE SAME TIME." EL DIA ALSO PUBLISHED VERBATIM A COMMUNIQUE REPORTED TO HAVE BEEN CIRCULATED BY THE GOVERNMENT INFORMATION OFFICE WHICH LED OFF WITH THE STATEMENT THAT "THROUGH THE INTERVENTION OF THE U.S. EMBASSY, A HIGH (GOU) OFFICIAL ON DECEMBER 15 RECEIVED THE VISIT OF A SO-CALLED "COMMISSION OF JURISTS..."

5. NATIONALISTIC PRO-MILITARY LA MANANA WHICH REPORTEDLY FAILED TO COVER THE PRESS CONFERENCE WAS ONLY ABLE TO COMMENT ON THE HUMAN RIGHTS GROUP IN AN EDITORIAL HEADED "WHAT MISSION IS THIS?" THE PAPER UNDERLINED THE STATEMENT BY THE JURISTS THAT "OUR PRESENCE COINCIDED WITH THAT OF THE CHIEF OF THE U.S. SOUTHERN COMMAND, (BUT) OUR WORK IS TOTALLY INDEPENDENT OF THAT CARRIED OUT BY THAT U.S. MILITARY OFFICER." ON THIS POINT, LA MANANA COMMENTED THAT "IT DOESN'T SEEM TO US THAT IT HAS BEEN THAT WAY. ON THE CONTRARY, THE EMPHASIS THAT THE JURISTS PUT ON SEPARATING THEIR MISSION FROM THE ONE FULFILLED BY MCAULIFFE

SEEMS TO SHOW, EXACTLY, THAT ONE STEP WAS A PROLONGATION OF THE OTHER."

6. THE ON-GOING JOURNALISTIC WAR OF WORDS OVER HUMAN RIGHTS CONTINUED MONDAY, DECEMBER 19. EL PAIS SPREAD A SEVEN-COLUMN BANNER, "LATIN AMERICAN DEFENSE AGAINST CRITICISM ON HUMAN RIGHTS" OVER A REPORT COMPILED FROM NEWS AGENCY DISPATCHES DATED IN BUENOS AIRES CARRYING THE SUBHEADING "PINOCHEZ TO ANSWER THE U.N. THIS WEEK; VIDELA DENIES REPORTS." EL PAIS PREFACED THE STORY BY COMMENTING, "CRITICISM AGAINST THE TREATMENT OF HUMAN RIGHTS IN LATIN AMERICAN COUNTRIES SEEMS TO RESPOND TO A WELL ORCHESTRATED CAMPAIGN WITH ROOTS IN VARIOUS PARTS OF THE WORLD. THE SUGGESTED 'COINCIDENCE' IN ONE WEEK OF ATTACKS AGAINST THREE OF THOSE COUNTRIES SUSTAINS THAT APPEARANCE..."

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7. LA MANANA DECEMBER 19, FRONT-PAGED COMMENTS TO THE PRESS BY NAVY CINC MARQUEZ CHARGING THAT THE JURISTS "HAD BEEN PAID TO SPEAK BADLY ABOUT URUGUAY." ALSO ASKED HIS OPINION ABOUT THE MCAULIFFE VISIT, ADMIRAL MARQUEZ REPLIED: "IT WOULD BE A LITTLE UNETHICAL FOR ME TO SPEAK. THERE WAS A PROBLEM THAT EVERYONE MORE OR LESS KNOWS ABOUT AND I DON'T WISH TO MAKE ANY COMMENT."

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8. COMMENT: THE "EL PAIS" ATTACKS ON GENERAL MC AULIFFE WHICH WE BELIEVE WERE ENGINEERED BY A MILITARY-CIVILIAN GROUP INTENT ON A SERIOUS CONFRONTATION WITH THE USG, PRODUCED AN UNEXPECTED WINDFALL OF HUMAN RIGHTS MEDIA COVERAGE, WHICH THE CONFRONTATION GROUP UNDOUBTEDLY MUST NOW REGRET. FOR SIX STRAIGHT DAYS URUGUAY'S FIVE MAJOR NEWSPAPERS FEATURED HEADLINES AND STORIES, DEALING WITH WHAT FIRST MC AULIFFE AND LATER THE GOLDMAN GROUP DID OR DID NOT SAY ABOUT HUMAN RIGHTS IN URUGUAY AND RELATED SUBJECTS. ALTHOUGH MUCH OF THIS COVERAGE WAS DISTORTED, EVEN "EL PAIS" WHICH DISTORTED THE MOST ALSO PRINTED THE PRESS CONFERENCE STATEMENTS OF MC AULIFFE AND THE GOLDMAN GROUP EXPLAINING AND DEFENDING USG AND INTERNATIONAL CONCERNS FOR HUMAN RIGHTS IN URUGUAY. MOREOVER, "EL DIA" EXPLOITED THE OPPORTUNITY TO PRESENT SOME EXCELLENT EDITORIAL COMMENT DEFENDING HUMAN RIGHTS AND USG POLICIES. AS A RESULT, HUMAN RIGHTS WEEK, WHICH WOULD HAVE GONE UNHEALED IN URUGUAY'S TIGHTLY CONTROLLED PRESS HAD A MOST FITTING COMMEMORATION HERE.

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